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JAN 24 1967

Pers. Russell, Richard
CIA 8-02
Pers. Fritchey, Clayton

Clayton Fritchey:

C. I. A.'s Inadequate Watchdog

WASHINGTON—The new arrangement worked out by Senator Richard Russell, Democrat, Georgia, chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, and Senator J. W. Fulbright, Democrat, Arkansas, chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, for broader surveillance of the Central Intelligence Agency is better than nothing at all, but it is still a long way from what is needed.

It won't do in the long run because at best it remains a makeshift, informal, irregu-

lar and ineffective way of keeping tabs on this tiger in the tank of United States foreign and military policy. The tiger can, and has, involved the United States in hostilities without any public sanction, or even public knowledge.

Every other agency of the government except the C. I. A. is accountable to one or more standing committees of the Senate and House. But the C. I. A. has managed for 20 years to squirm out of the effective reach of Congress.

Why then this immunity for the C. I. A.? The short an-

swer is accident and Senator Russell. It was instantly obvious that nuclear power would have to be put under civilian control, but when the C. I. A. was first organized in 1946 no one foresaw that it had the potential of becoming an "invisible government" of its own.

The upshot was that in the absence of formal congressional supervision, the agency gradually was put under the loose surveillance of a so-called watchdog group, headed by Russell and half a dozen other senators and representatives from the Armed Services and Appropriations Committees.

Since the watchdogs shrank from asking the C. I. A. embarrassing questions (Senator Russell admits he was never informed about the Bay of Pigs invasion) this arrangement was eminently satisfactory to the agency, but it is not satisfactory to a growing number of senators.

Now the astute Russell has temporarily taken some of the steam out of those senators by inviting Senator Fulbright and two other members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to join his watchdog group. Thus, real supervision will probably have to wait until another egregious C. I. A. blunder rekindles public interest.

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SEATTLE, WASH.
TIMES

E-226,737
S-257,959

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Cong. Inquiry

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